

REMARKS

Introduction

Claims 1-14 remain in the application, of which claims 1-5, 7-10 and 12-14 are amended hereby.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-5, 7-10, 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,055,411 (Ishida).

Amended claim 1 of the present application is directed to a method for extending the radio coverage area of a communication system, including a master station and slave stations, operating according to a predetermined radio protocol. The system includes "a primary master station having a radio coverage area," "a first secondary slave station within the coverage area" and "a further secondary slave station which is located outside of the radio coverage area of the primary master station." The method includes a message exchange process in which: "the first secondary slave station receives from the primary master station messages intended for the further secondary slave station," and "transmits said messages to the further secondary slave station." The "first secondary slave station receives from the further secondary slave station messages intended for the primary master station," and "transmits said messages to the primary master station."

Thus, advantageously, by way of the claimed invention, a "primary master station" can exchange a message with a "first secondary slave station" that is located within the radio coverage area of the "primary master station." The "further secondary slave station," located outside of the radio coverage area of the "primary master station," can receive the message from the "first secondary slave station." Similarly, the "further secondary slave

station," located outside the radio coverage area of the "primary master station," can send a message to the "primary master station" via the "first secondary slave station." Thus, by way of the claimed invention, a "primary master station" can communicate with secondary slave stations outside of the radio coverage area of the primary master station. (See present application as published (US 2005/0208928 A1) at paragraph [0029], lines 1-19 and Figure 1). Such a scenario can be helpful if, for example, a slave station is moved out of range of a master station or, if a change in a building layout causes a modification to the range of a master station, causing a slave station to be outside the range of the master station. (See present application as published at paragraphs [0045] through [0047]).

Ishida describes a system whereby a personal station, such as a cell phone (211) can have its transmission relayed to a cell tower or cell site (204) via another cell tower or cell site (202, 201). (See Ishida at column 8, lines 8-22 and Figure 5). Thus, Ishida describes a slave station (211) having a transmission that gets relayed to a master cell tower (204) via other master cell towers (202, 201). The relaying cell towers (202, 201) are not described or shown as being slaves to the cell tower (204). Ishida does not describe a "further secondary slave station which is located outside of the radio coverage area of the primary master station."

Applicants submit that Ishida does not describe all of the features of amended claim 1 of the present application. For example, Ishida does not describe a process whereby a "first secondary slave station receives from the primary master station messages intended for the further secondary slave station," and "transmits said messages to the further secondary slave station," wherein the "further secondary slave station ... is located outside of the radio coverage area of the primary master station." Similarly, Ishida does not describe that the "first secondary slave station receives from the further secondary slave station messages intended for the primary master station," and "transmits said messages to the primary master station."

Accordingly, for at least these reasons, claim 1 is deemed to distinguish patentably over Ishida.

Independent claims 7 and 12, while differing in form and scope from claim 1, recite features similar to those discussed above with respect to the patentability of claim 1. Accordingly, applicants submit that claims 7 and 12 are patentable over Ishida, at least for the reasons stated above with respect to the patentability of claim 1.

Each of claims 2-5, 8-10 and 13 ultimately depend from one of claims 1, 7 and 12. Accordingly, applicants submit that claims 2-5, 8-10 and 13 are patentable over Ishida, at least for the reasons stated above with respect to the patentability of claims 1, 7 and 12.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 6, 11 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over a combination of Olson and U.S. Patent No. 6,830,340 (Olson).

Each of claims 6, 11 and 14 depend from one of claims 1, 7 and 12, and are thus deemed patentable over Ishida for at least the reasons stated above with respect to the patentability of those claims.

Olson is directed to a system for rendering an image to be projected, but does not cure the deficiencies of Ishida. Accordingly, applicants submit that claims 6, 11 and 14 are patentable over Ishida and Olson, either taken alone or in combination.

Thus, applicants submit that each of the claims of the present application are patentable over each of the references of record, either taken alone, or in any proposed hypothetical combination. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections to the claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above remarks, reconsideration and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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